ABERDEEN PHILATELIC SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER January 2017

Forthcoming meetings: As usual we begin the year with the annual alphabet night on 12th January, with everyone invited to participate. This year it is letter 'F', so we can surely expect to see some Falkland Islands, France and Finland, but who can produce some fiscals, forgeries, flown covers, free franks, fumigated mail or even foreign stamps? Anything from one to eight sheets is welcome and nothing is ever rejected.

Thank you to members for supporting the Room Auction last month. Gross sales on the night were a little over £260 and with a fair number of donated lots the Society proceeds were £63.25..... and of course we all had a lot of fun.

The host society at the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies' annual **Congress at the Dewars Centre in Perth** on 21st and 22nd April 2017 will be the Lanarkshire Philatelic Society, a large society, so we may anticipate an excellent Host Society display. Their theme will be the Cameronians in 1917 with an appropriately designed cover depicting the regiment in 1917. The special commemorative cancellation which can be obtained by posting an item of mail at the event, depicts the Cameronians' badge. There will also be a commemorative postcard depicting famous people born in Lanarkshire (how many can you think of?). The cover and card will probably be available before the event at one of our society meetings. Any member unable to attend but who would like to obtain the cover or card should let the President know. There will be members present who will be happy to assist. There are pictures of the two items and the postmark on the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies' website under Congress. As usual, there will be a Congress dinner on the evening of the 21st. A block booking will be made at the Congress hotel, and I will circulate the details as soon as I have them.

As always, Congress will include the national competition and the open competition. The rules for both these competition are on the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies web-site. The open competition is a one-frame (16 pages) event where you are free to put up anything you want and is judged by the popular vote of visitors to Congress. The national competition is a more formal event, judged according to UK national rules, with a range of classes, and trophies for the best entry in each class. Last year, some trophies were not awarded because there were no entrants in the classes for Scottish Postal History, literature, and the general class for pre-1900 stamps. There are also classes for post-1900 stamps, GB, social and thematic philately, aerophilately, postal history, Cinderella stamps and postcards. The national competition provides a starting point for competitive exhibiting or for trying out a new exhibit. Exhibitors often go on to exhibit at STAMPEX and internationally. It is the forum for some of the best philately on display at Congress and exhibitors make a very valuable contribution to Congress. If you need any further information please contact our society's delegate to the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies, Jeff Stone. If you haven't been to this event before, it is well worth a day trip to Perth – very accessible by train or car.

The date for **the Society's next postal auction** (No. 31) is Thursday 30th March 2017 and the last date for submission of lots is the end of January. Already over 400 lots have come in and there is strength in British Commonwealth stamps. You may choose to bid for the 1936 Tit Bits Rapid Reference Home Guide to help you through 2017. The catalogue should be completed by the end of February for viewing.

Forthcoming North-East Postcard, Stamp & Collectables Fairs: Montrose (Hillside Village Hall, Dubton Road) 18 February, 10-3; Inverurie (West Church Hall, West High Street) 11 March 10-4; Aberdeen (Queens Cross Church, Albyn Place) 29 April 1030-1630.

Have you a stamp question that needs an answer? An address in Chinese, Arabic or Russian that needs translating? A cover whose route needs additional information? A very useful internet resource is the chat forum, "**STAMPBOARDS**", using the thread "Ask a question-someone will know the answer". Several members already use it, once we mastered the format and the RULES. If you have never seen it, try Google and browse it for a few days to see the sorts of things under discussion. I have to say it comes with a Health Warning! While God had 10 Commandments for Moses, Stampboards has 45 rules! Run and owned by an acerbic (and frequently rude) Australian Dealer com journalist, Glen Stephens, even a minor transgression earns a verbal slap on the wrist and a major infringement merits a week's suspension. I have been banned/ suspended 5 times in the past 6 years, so do tend to keep below the parapet these days. Rule 1 asks you to visit the Roll call and sign in. You will soon find that the board is VISUAL and any query must have a picture (Rule11.)There is a tutorial showing how to put an image using PHOTOBUCKET or IMGUR. I guarantee you will get prodded if your "post" does not comply with the Rules, but the dozen or so Moderators will keep you right more gently than Glen. So stick with it and it will be rewarding. After you have made a few "posts" you are allowed to swap, to buy and sell (with zero commission, Glen hates ebay with a passion!) participate in mini competitions with free give away prizes. In spite of the sarcastic and sometimes nasty owner, the forum has many uses and can be addictive! That's the other health warning! There are a lot of friendly users, several of whom I have met in person at Congress, and Stampex. There's a lot more here than just stamps and one member here has been recruited via Stampboards. Email Alex Walker if you want to try it and need help or advice, at seafield28@gmail.com

The Collectors Club of Chicago has launched **a new website** with the intention of providing comprehensive information on all aspects of philately, with a philatelic encyclopaedia, expertising information, publications, etc.. Check it out at collectorsclubchicago.org.

I conclude this newsletter with a late Christmas card, actually a card sent from Finland, as you might guess from the origins of the stamps used in its making. An act of philatelic vandalism or a novel way to put some very common stamps to good use? Certainly no worse than the Victorian ladies who stuck stamps on lamp shades or even papered the walls with them!